



**OAXACA, MEXICO, Oct. 29** — Today, thousands of fascist federal police with tanks and bullets invaded this city of rebellion. Protestors reinforced their barricades with burning busses, some with full gas tanks. Thousands of workers with bags of rocks, with poles and Molotov cocktails waited for the police. Then the cops were met with a barrage of rocks. Fighting was hand to hand.

Other police used 80 buses to open the roads but youth ran alongside cutting their tires and burning some — busses and police. Two older people with rock-filled bags on their shoulders ran from a barricade to an opening, bringing the rocks to the youth.

At one barricade led by women, demonstrations captured 12 unarmed young soldiers dressed in civilian clothes, detained them and later turned them over to the military.

Others wrongly waved the Mexican flag to try to slow the attack. But this flag — which President Fox holds to his chest — represents the bosses, not the workers.

By day's end, smoke and tear gas filled the city. Four workers were killed, with hundreds injured and arrested. The working class in general joined the struggle: teachers, workers, students and farm workers. It was a lesson for future struggles.

The city fell into the fascists' hands, but the spirit of struggle is freer than ever. This was one more battle in the long war against capitalism.

## SUPPORT SPREADING

Four hundred thousand teachers from the CNTE (a national dissident group inside the Teachers Union) called for a work stoppage against the fascist police assault on the five-month struggle in Oaxaca. Protests have spread throughout Mexico and in Los Angeles, New York City, London, Madrid and many other cities. Political conditions for bringing communist ideas to the masses are maturing. PLP is helping to organize support actions in the U.S. and Latin America while presenting the goal of communist revolution.

Thousands of these now experienced fighters are open to a broader vision of the revolutionary struggle, not just for crumbs or capitalist reforms but also for control of all state power through a real communist revolution.

Oaxaca is one of Mexico's poorest states, with a large indigenous population and a reputation for rebelliousness. Control over Oaxaca is crucial for the bosses to prevent opposition to their project linking the Pacific Ocean with the Gulf of Mexico — part of Plan Puebla Panama, (see box page 5) with great potential for tourism as well as an important transportation hub. Oaxaca is a source of cheap labor forced to migrate to the U.S., Mexico City and northern Mexico. The bosses fear that the racism, poverty and rebelliousness provide fertile ground for the revolt to spread.

The competing rulers have both political and economic motives for smashing the movement. Ex-governors Carrasco and Murat want to preserve control of state power and guarantee their profits. Elba Gordillo, the top hack of the SNTE (National Teachers' Union) — and right hand of Mexico's newly-elected president Calderón — wants to control the militant Oaxaca SNTE Section 22. Governor Ulises represents another ruling-class faction and uses violence to maintain his position.

While these murderers vie for power, the workers are repressed and killed. Ulises has held on because the other groups can't agree. He has the support of most of the PRI party, (defeated by Fox after sixty years in rule,) which fears losing control of the State of Oaxaca to other electoral parties.

The fascist repression reveals the true face of Fox, Calderón, Abascal (Interior Minister) and the PAN, Fox's party. Although having tactical disagreements with PAN, López Obrador and his opposition PRD party showed their pro-boss class interest by their tepid response to the government's criminal actions. All of them are sworn enemies of the working class. We should never trust any of them or the capitalist system that they defend by murdering workers.

The PLP has played a modest but important role in the movement in Oaxaca, including distribution of CHALLENGE, the spreading of com-

*continued on page 5*

# RULERS TRY TO FOOL WORKERS WITH PHONY IRAQ 'EXIT' SCHEMES

More than 100 GI's lost their lives to U.S. imperialism in Iraq during October. The puppet Iraqi government has given up trying to count its own dead citizens. Meanwhile, Establishment liberals are cynically trying to parlay disgust at the mounting carnage into a Democratic Congressional electoral victory and tighter control of U.S. foreign policy for the Bush regime's remaining two years. The dominant liberal wing of U.S. capitalism forced Bush to make a public admission of mistakes over Iraq at his October 25 press conference. Bush, dropping the "Stay-the-Course" slogan, welcomed the forthcoming recommendations of the Iraq Study Group (ISG), headed by Republican James Baker and Democrat Lee Hamilton. Behind its misleading "phased withdrawal" rhetoric, the panel's report reflects the rulers' need for intensified warfare in the oil-rich Middle East.

*Oil-thirsty Liberals Seek More Mid-East Killing, Not Less*

The ISG report, slated for post-Election Day publication but leaked to the press in mid-October, presents two main options, "Stability First" and "Redeploy and Contain." The former would focus U.S. troops on wiping out insurgents in Baghdad (population 5,000,000), an operation that would make November 2005 U.S.-led massacre in Fallujah (population 400,000) look like a tea party. The latter meshes with calls by Rep. John Murtha and a host of Democratic Congressional candidates for a tactical retreat of U.S. forces from Iraq followed by an all-out re-invasion of the entire region. The re-deployers don't want all the troops out, however. The U.S. has built 14 permanent military bases near Iraq's oil fields, pipelines, and major cities.

The ISG also recommends negotiating with Iran and Syria. Such talks would be classic gunboat diplomacy. The U.S. Navy has recently dispatched two strike groups, including the aircraft carrier Enterprise, to the Persian Gulf. And, under the guise of monitoring the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, U.S.-led NATO is conducting a massive naval build-up in the eastern Mediterranean.

*Baker-Hamilton Brain-Trust Imperialist to the Core*

Though hailing from Texas, ISG co-chairman Baker serves the imperialist Eastern Establishment. His law firm, Baker Botts, has represented Exxon Mobil and its predecessors for over a century. The Texas Commerce Bank, started by Baker's grandfather, is now part of JP MorganChase. As papa Bush's Secretary of State, Baker rounded up allies for the first Iraq war. Even before the second one began, the Baker Institute he founded teamed up with the Rockefeller-led Council on Foreign Relations to produce "Guiding Principles," a 32-page document

*continued on page 2*

*Latin America Elections*

## Bosses Seek Better Deals from U.S. Imperialist Rivals

It's election season across Latin America, and capitalist elections can mean both nothing and something. Capitalists spend billions on them to try to settle disagreements within their class and to win the allegiance of workers, who are led to bank their hopes of a better world on electoral change.

*Continued on top page 2*

# Imperialist Rivalries Dictate Latin American Elections

*continued from front page*

Elections provide a dialectics lesson in appearance and essence. Capitalism trains us to think superficially. The bosses celebrate elections, saying our voices matter. Politicians make big promises, but after the fuss of expensive elections, the working class always loses out. Using dialectics, however, we can learn to see beyond the appearances the media present and analyze the essential nature of the elections: no matter which politicians win they serve the bosses, not the workers.

## Latin American Elections Reflect Splits in the Ruling Classes

Venezuela is a key oil producer which the U.S. once considered its backyard. Many workers see Venezuela's president Hugo Chávez as a courageous anti-imperialist leader; he survived a U.S.-backed 2002 coup and called Bush the "devil" in a recent UN speech as part of his now troubled bid for a Security Council seat. But he is only anti-U.S. (or merely anti-Bush), not a real anti-imperialist. Challengers to U.S. imperialism like China, India, Russia and Iran are investing heavily in Venezuela's oil. Venezuela is now shifting oil exports from the U.S. to China and India (in the first seven months of 2006, U.S. imports of Venezuelan oil declined 13% compared to the same period in 2005). Russia's Gazprom and Lukoil are now investing heavily in Venezuela oil and gas. Russia also just signed a billion-dollar deal to sell modern weapons to the Venezuelan Armed Forces. Also, a section of the local ruling class is making huge profits because of the oil

price boom, while workers have gotten just a few crumbs. The support for Chavez by U.S. imperialist rivals symbolizes the relative decline of U.S. influence in Latin

America, even though U.S. Big Oil and banks are still making big bucks in Venezuela. Chávez looks like he'll win the December presidential election. His slogan is "Ten Million Votes Down Their Throats." Chavez's discredited opposition, pro-U.S. factions of local rulers, has united around Manuel Rosales who supported the 2002 U.S.-backed coup against Chavez, later calling it a "mistake" in a "moment of confusion."

## BRAZIL

In Brazil, the nation with the world's sharpest social inequality, the current "Workers" Party president "Lula" da Silva won re-election with 60% of the votes in the second round, defeating the more pro-U.S. candidate Gerardo Alckmin. Workers supported Lula, an ex-metal-worker and unionist, because of his reputation as a "working-class fighter." In 2002, when Lula was first elected, this appearance of being "pro-worker" worked, and did again today despite the corruption surrounding his Party.

But Lula basically represents the Sao Paulo bourgeoisie (the most powerful in Latin America) and Petrobras (the oil monopoly owned jointly by the state and private local and foreign investors). Since 2002, Lula has not changed the sharp social inequality or racism in this mostly non-white country. He didn't even withdraw Brazilian troops from Haiti after the U.S.-led invasion ousted Pres. Aristide. But Lula has bolstered Brazil's economic ties with China, selling it soy, iron ore and meat worth billions, while Brazilian workers suffer deep social spending cuts. By 2003, the total value of trade between the two countries was \$36 billion; it's projected to reach \$100 billion by 2010.

## ECUADOR

A November run-off election in Ecuador features billionaire Alvaro Noboa, who favors close ties with the U.S. and Rafael Correa, a young professor. Noboa is the strike-breaking owner of many banana plantations utilizing child labor. Univ. of Illinois-trained economist Correa again is seen as the "lesser of two evils" by many, but he

is just another capitalist tool. Correa's "leftist," campaign is based on diverting oil, Ecuador's main export, from the U.S. and into Asia. A section of the local rulers wants Correa to cash in on the opportunities with U.S. rivals. This doesn't mean Correa will end the poverty and racism suffered by urban and rural workers (many indigenous). He doesn't even plan to end the dollarization of the currency which plunged workers into more poverty a few years ago when it was adopted. According to one of his colleagues: "Correa is against the status quo, but that doesn't make him a Marxist or a messianic

The shifting of Latin American ruling-class alliances away from U.S. influence and towards major rivals represents an area of concern for U.S. imperialism.

leader like Chavez" (NY Times, 10/16). The Times admits, "That may be why some prominent financiers and businessmen have backed him." Correa is in essence representing the bosses seeking to change the "status quo" of U.S. domination to some other imperialist bloc. And to the working class of Ecuador, he's a mortal enemy.

The shifting of Latin American ruling-class alliances away from U.S. influence and towards major rivals represents an area of concern for U.S. imperialism. The capitalists' constant rivalry for natural resources, markets, and labor is leading to imperialist wars world-wide. Our job as communists is not to build illusions about "lesser evil" bosses but to seize the opportunity to turn their wars into revolutionary struggles. That is why we aim to build a mass communist international PLP. A first step is to expand the CHALLENGE networks, to win workers to communist politics. Imperialism may seem invincible now, but in the long run it is vulnerable. There are two classes in this world: workers and bosses. What matters is which class wins, not which capitalist. ☛

## WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to smash capitalism — wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead:" capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. Capitalism returned to the Soviet Union and China because socialism failed to wipe out many aspects of the profit system, like wages and division of labor.

Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism — the dictatorship of the proletariat. This fight requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. Everyone will share in society's benefits and burdens.

Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One International working class, one world, one Party.

Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. **Join Us!**

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# Phony 'Exit' Schemes

*continued from front page*

on how to conduct the occupation. Bush & Co. failed to heed it. Hamilton, the ISG's other leader, sports equally impressive imperialist credentials. A Hart-Rudman commissioner, he helped draft U.S. rulers' plans for maintaining their supremacy well into the 21st Century by implementing a police state to mobilize the nation for ever larger wars.

## DEMS PUSH MILITARISM

Whatever success liberals may have in exerting influence over the White House and getting Democrats elected won't benefit the working class one bit. Rumsfeld is indeed a war criminal. But firing him, as the liberal New York Times demanded (10/24/06), would only advance the imperialists' deadly agenda. The militaristic mobilization that liberals really want comes through loud and clear in the latest issue of "Blueprint," published by the Democratic Leadership Council, headed by none other than Hillary Clinton. Its lead article, "The Plan: Big Ideas for America," says, "All Americans between the ages of 18 and 25 should be asked to serve their country by going through three months of basic civil defense training and community service. This is not a draft — nor is it military. Young people will be trained not as soldiers, but simply as citizens who understand their responsibilities in the event of natural disaster, epidemic, or terrorist attack." The phony "anti-militarism" soon yields to imperialist warmongering when the article later says, "We need to fortify the military's 'thin green line' around the world by adding to the Special Forces and the Marines, and expanding the Army by 100,000 more troops."

The state of affairs that necessitates the rulers' Baker-Hamilton intervention presents the working class both with the danger of more lethal wars and the opportunity to organize against them. Simply put, Bush faces the task of mobilizing, people who don't want to be mobilized. The Clinton-appointed bi-partisan Hart-Rudman Commission report demands a sacrifice of "blood and treasure" for U.S. imperialism — the "treasure" meaning *higher taxes*, not tax cuts. But capitalists with less imperialist aspirations — who comprise part of Bush's voting base — do not want war taxes eating into their profits. More importantly, the vast majority of workers are unwilling to give their lives for Exxon and JP Morgan Chase in Iraq, Afghanistan or anywhere else. In such times, our Party can and must build a working-class anti-imperialist war movement with the outlook of eliminating the profit system through communist revolution.

(Disciplining both capitalists and workers is crucial to the rulers' war plans. Next issue will analyze future New York governor Eliot Spitzer, the so-called "Sheriff of Wall Street," and the growth of the U.S. police state.) ☛

# GI's Begin to Opt Out of Iraq War

Hitting the military brass like a blow to the solar plexus, over 1,000 U.S. soldiers, sailors and marines have signed an "appeal for redress" to Congress calling for a quick end to the war in Iraq. More troops are signing each day. PLP must intensify its efforts to build an alliance of workers, students and active-duty military to fight for revolution.

Building on the not-too-distant memory of the GI resistance to the Vietnam War, new military activists have joined with existing anti-war veterans and military family groups to press this new offensive.

But we should be aware that the ruling class is preparing a trap. The Democrats are claiming to be anti-war in order to use our class's hatred for the war in Iraq to sucker us into voting for them. They have a more sophisticated plan for waging imperialist war, and want to enlist workers to support it. So, as active-duty troops begin to opt out of this war, we must sharpen the struggle from being anti-war to being anti-capitalist and pro-communist, and not let our friends, fellow soldiers, families, and others be misled into relying on liberal politicians to solve the challenges of imperialism. ☛

\*For a PLP Analysis of the 50th anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian revolt: <http://plp.org/hungary56.html>

# BUILDING COMMUNIST CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS AMONG D.C. TRANSIT WORKERS

**WASHINGTON, D.C., Oct. 21** — PLP study groups and growing youth leadership are helping consolidate the Party among Metro transit workers. Broader political education events train this emerging leadership and bring more revolutionary ideas to a wider circle of workers.

In this spirit, Local 689 held the third annual Committee on Political Education (COPE) Conference. Both younger and senior workers engaged in intense discussions about the Iraq war, the challenge of rising healthcare and pension costs and the need for militant actions, including strikes, to advance our class's interests. Significantly, not a single politician was invited.

Before Metro workers elected a communist president, there were no COPE conferences. Instead, the union would host a dinner/dance party and invite politicians as keynote speakers. The effect of those events was deadening. It deepened the reliance of union members on politicians and solidified the alignment of the union leadership with the bosses' politicians. The recent COPE conferences have broken with

the politicians, struggled for higher levels of class consciousness and analysis on the part of rank-and-file workers, and brought an environment that helps create more revolutionaries. That's a worthwhile goal for the future of our class!

This conference's discussion about Iraq followed the viewing of a short video of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech "Beyond Vietnam" in which King drew parallels between the war in Vietnam and racism in the U.S., and questioned pacifism after seeing workers struggling to survive in U.S. ghettos and on the front lines in Vietnam. This sparked a lively discussion about whether Democratic politicians actually want to end the war. We said no, they're lying as usual! U.S. imperialist interests are too great in Iraq for the bosses to give up in that area — Democrats have the same goal as Republicans on this issue (with slightly different tactics).

Preparing to fight the looming cuts in health coverage and pensions requires mass, conscious mobilization, not reliance on the union president to be a



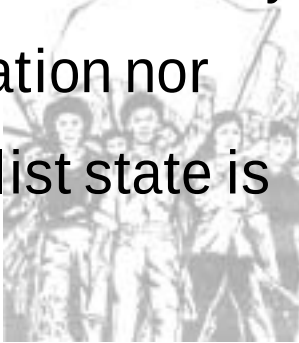
Summer 2005—Over 120 transit workers from Metro, joined by over 100 supporters from the PLP Summer Project and several other unions, boisterously challenged Metro, demanding they negotiate honestly for a decent contract.

"clever negotiator." Past union history has turned off many workers and led others to rely on favors from the union officers instead of militant struggle. The current communist president concluded the discussion of the bosses' attacks and past inadequate responses with a clear call to prepare for a mass strike when the contract expires in 2008.☸

## Students Oppose Military 'Career Fair,' Challenge University Intimidation

**CALIFORNIA, Oct. 29** —Last week, over 70 students marched back and forth through a Southern California campus fair filled with military and police recruiters chanting, "La Migra, La Policia, La Misma Porqueria!" ("The Border Patrol, the Cops, the Same Crap!") and "Political Repression Means Fight Back!" They were protesting police infiltration, military recruitment and imperialist war. As part of a growing trend, the university administration is trying to suppress militant, anti-imperialist activism through intimidation, police surveillance, and by limiting "free speech zones." The university career fair was a "Who's Who" of local police, border patrol and all the armed forces, reflecting the rulers' efforts to build war and fascism.

'Neither the university administration nor the capitalist state is neutral.'



People readily took over 75 CHALLENGES, many especially interested in articles about Oaxaca and the war in Iraq. PLP's paper brought a welcome note of communist internationalism to the event.

Several months ago, a policewoman had infiltrated an immigrants' rights campus organization. She attended meetings, claiming to be a student. She later openly bragged about her stoolpigeon activities when she and another cop were arresting a student in a campus protest opposing the invasion of Lebanon.

This revelation opened students' eyes, leading many to see the university's real function as an institution to win students to the ruling class's ideology and to build fascism. Many were outraged and spurred to protest in last week's march.

University administrators tried to quiet and coerce the students to end their march. Some even argued that the "nice

people with badges" were here "to give the students jobs."

Even many non-demonstrators were surprised at the array of employers: the border patrol, 11 different police and sheriff departments and the military. The push to recruit to such jobs on this working-class campus reflects the ruling class's need to replenish its army for wider wars, to continue its racist attacks at the border and in the cities. At the rally, one student speaker condemned the school's erecting a new criminology lab in partnership with the LAPD, while at the same time the war rages, student tuition keeps rising and cut-backs shrink the number of classes. Another speaker called for unity of students, workers and soldiers to build a revolutionary movement.

One point of debate among the activists was whether the demonstration should emphasize "free speech" or the fight against imperialism and racism. The free speech issue has arisen on other campuses as the rulers move to suppress an anti-imperialist movement. However, many are seeing that the fight for "free speech" contradicts building a revolutionary movement.

For example, while students spoke attacking the administration, one organizer felt it important to present the "other side," to allow a pro-war Republican to speak. Capitalist "free speech" means allowing such rights for racists like the Minutemen or the KKK, who shouldn't be allowed to spew their racist, nationalist garbage anywhere! The bosses allow "free speech" for those who support the ruling-class agenda, while attacking and suppressing those who oppose it.

Neither the university administration nor the capitalist state is neutral. As their wars spread, they will use their state power to try to stop the revolutionary movement. Only our long-term fight to destroy this capitalist system with communist revolution can end imperialist war and racist police terror. Recent campus events have led to deeper discussions about the system and the need for communism and the PLP.☸

## FIGHTING HIV and AIDS, FIGHTING FOR REVOLUTION!

**WASHINGTON, DC, Oct. 21**— Today, over 50 comrades and friends in the anti-racist struggle against HIV and AIDS assembled at the Washington Highlands Library in the heart of Washington, D.C.'s impoverished black community to fight for more resources and programs to battle the HIV and AIDS epidemic here.

Washington, D.C. has the worst incidence of AIDS in the U.S. D.C. health providers estimate that five percent of the population and ten percent of the city's black men are HIV positive, with the infection rate for women climbing quickly. Nationally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that 47 percent of gay black men have HIV, an outrageous number. The epidemic is further fueled by substance use from heroin to cocaine, untreated mental illness and social stigma against AIDS patients.

PLP'ers bring a revolutionary communist perspective to this struggle. The capitalists and imperialists commit mass murder by creating conditions in which millions contract the disease worldwide. The root causes of the spread of AIDS include the capitalist creations of wars, poverty, housing segregation, sexism and disruptive jobs that displace and fracture families. Capitalists also profit from drug-pushing in the cities and save money by denying mental-health care and substance-use care to workers ravaged by capitalism. On top of this, capitalist culture produces stigma and religious ostracism about the disease, as well as individualistic consciousness that says that public health need not deal with this disease because it's a personal issue and the fault of the individual anyway!

PLP'ers have been working in the coalition of HIV and AIDS activists to carry out grassroots organizing for the past year from the Washington Highlands Public Library. Ward 8 Democrats also meet there monthly

to advance their misleading reform rhetoric, so we are reaching many young people and politicians with our sharper advocacy and anti-capitalist analysis.

The Disparities Committee of the Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association (MWPHA) has led politically sharp outreach activities every third Saturday, not only distributing condoms and testing information, but also petitioning for jobs and services and involving those most affected.

Participating at today's speakout along with MWPHA were Metro Teen AIDS, the Condom Project, Unity Health Care, and Family and Medical Counseling Service, RAP, Inc., and the Whitman Walker Clinic. D.C. Fights Back is a new activist HIV group that led efforts to make local politicians defend their basically nonexistent response to AIDS during the recent mayoral and city council elections. This week MWPHA voted to make this their advocacy program for the next two years, which should deepen the mass character of the campaign against HIV and AIDS.

Reform demands such as condoms in the schools and on the buses, needle exchange with drug rehab, jobs and increased funding for Ryan White (AIDS treatment legislation) and AIDS Drug Assistance Programs, are sharp struggles that lead to intense political discussion and analysis with public health workers, community residents and politicians. These debates and struggles will not change the root cause of the problem, however. So it is crucial that these activists, many of whom already understand that capitalism is the culprit, join the PLP to fight to topple the entire capitalist structure. PLP'ers continue to meet one-on-one with students and young workers, as well as with the patients and community workers. A Party study group is in the works.☸



# PL'ers Fight for Real Communist Politics at Conference

**AMHERST, MASS., Oct. 28** — Members and friends of PLP participated in this weekend's triennial conference of "Rethinking Marxism" at the University of Massachusetts here. The conference focus was "Rethinking Communism." Communism certainly invites lots of rethinking. The record of the 20th century communist movement urgently requires analysis and reassessment. This conference only partially met this requirement. PLP, more than any other force, pressed for urgent discussion and debate.

One session, on "red pedagogy," addressed being a communist teacher in a working-class college: how to break down barriers between theory and practice and how to inspire students to view action against inequality as integral to their growth as thinking beings. Other sessions debated current U.S. domestic and foreign policy. In one, prominent liberals and neo-Marxists stressed the necessity to "defend democracy" as the bulwark against emerging fascism and anguished over the votes stolen by the Republicans in 2000 and 2004. PLP members and friends emphasized the theft of wages intrinsic to capitalism, as well as the theft of jobs under Democrats because of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement, implemented under Clinton).

Other sessions reviewed the history of the communist movement. The record of the Stalin era — as demonically caricatured in Nikita Khrushchev's "secret speech" of 1956 about was subjected to more positive, if critical, review. The return of capitalism in China was strongly criticized, and anti-communist rants about the supposed "disasters" of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution were challenged.

Revolutionary communist politics were of great interest to some, but many others were pulled to the right by neo-Marxism. Some cited as gospel truth the ideas of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, who say that

"oppositional trans-class global 'people'" have replaced the working class and that it's no longer necessary to organize a revolution to overthrow the capitalists' state. Others were influenced by the economic analyses of the group from the journal "Rethinking Marxism" (conference sponsors), who state revolution is "unnecessary" because elements of communist production "already exist under capitalism," and need only be brought to fruition.

The irrelevant academic nature of the "Marxism" advocated by the conference's sponsors emerged during the large plenary meetings, which completely evaded all questions on the theory and practice of communism. In the closing plenary, supposedly devoted to the topic "Rethinking Communism," this betrayal of the conference participants came out sharply. Speakers droned on about bourgeois philosophy, vaguely red-baited the 20th century communist legacy, and offered no analysis whatsoever about what to do.

PLP members and friends, and others in the audience, roundly attacked them. The former stressed the imminence of fascism, the growth of racism (domestic and international), and the need to rebuild the communist movement. A PLP member outlined our analysis of the historical failures of socialism — seen in hindsight — and the need to fight directly for communism by building a mass party around that line.

PLP members and friends who boldly challenged the inadequacies of neo-Marxism were warmly congratulated by various conference participants. PLP'ers distributed 350 Party flyers and many people bought PL material from our literature table, leading to many fruitful contacts. Without PLP's presence at the conference, it would have been a far tamer affair, constituting no threat at all to the bourgeois sources that fund it. ☸

## Bronx Postal Workers Battle Layoffs, Closings



**BRONX, NY, Oct. 26** — Postal workers picketed the Bronx GPO at 149th St. and the Grand Concourse protesting the U.S. Postal Service's (USPS) plan to close 139 processing centers nationwide by Nov. 18. Similar actions occurred in Newark, NJ, Georgia, Texas and elsewhere. Workers could lose their jobs and customers will suffer even more delays in services and deliveries.

Postal workers collected signatures among area residents to send to Senators Clinton and Schumer stating that the transferring of operations to Manhattan will cause delays at three important local mail centers; will delay mail deliveries to residential and commercial customers; and the job losses will have a devastating effect on local Bronx businesses.

Interestingly, Clinton and Schumer have done nothing to save these jobs and services but they continue to vote for more funds for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and for even more troops to be sent there, to be paid for partly out of cutbacks like these. The cuts have a racist character, affecting mainly black and Latino residents of the Bronx.

The USPS has held no public hearing to inform the community of the cutbacks. The Bronx Coalition to Save Postal Offices is organizing its own community hearing for 12 noon on Sat., Nov. 18, in Lincoln Hospital's auditorium, 234 E. 149th St.

The Bronx GPO operation, employing 250 workers on three shifts, would be transferred to Manhattan's Morgan General Mail Facility, benefiting mainly corporations and big businesses. ☸

## Auto Bosses' Rivalry Puts Brakes on Ford, GM

**DETROIT, MI** — "All the old rules of the game are gone," said James P. Womack, co-founder of the Lean Enterprise Institute. He was referring to the deepening crisis of the domestic U.S. auto industry.

The fact that autoworkers may very well be seeing through their union's surrender to the bosses' crisis is evident in some Ford workers' reactions to their leaders' "solution." At a recent PLP Communist Workers' School, a Ford worker reported that his local leadership circulated a survey to get an idea which buyout options workers were taking. Many of the surveys came back with "FUCK YOU" written on them.

Here is evidence that the Big Three is no more:

- Ford lost \$7.2 billion through September and could lose \$10.6-billion this year, matching GM's losses last year. Ford is closing 16 factories, eliminating 40,000 jobs and will not make a profit in North America until 2009. After having been "#2" to G.M. for 70 years, Ford will now fall behind Toyota in the U.S. market. After the current round of job cuts, there will be more Toyota workers in the U.S. than Ford workers.

- G.M. is cutting 30,000 jobs and closing a dozen plants. It is about to be passed by Toyota as the biggest auto producer in the world. G.M. just introduced the Chevrolet Aveo subcompact, built for it by its South Korean partner, Daewoo.

- The Chrysler Group reported a \$1.5 billion loss for this summer, more than twice what it expected. DaimlerChrysler is pairing with the Chinese automaker Chery to build a subcompact car.

- Bankrupt Delphi, spun off by GM to become the world's largest parts supplier, will eliminate nearly 75% of its U.S. work-

force through buyouts and early retirements by the end of this year. It intends to slash the wages of the few remaining workers in half.

- As GM, Ford and Chrysler continue to retreat, the foreign competition is investing billions of dollars in U.S. factories, hiring thousands of workers.

- The United Automobile Workers (UAW), as always, is a loyal servant and junior partner to the bosses in this bloody restructuring. It negotiated the job eliminations at GM, Ford and Delphi sending a signal to the workers to get out before 2007 contract talks, when things will get even worse. They granted health care concessions to G.M. and Ford, and are now in similar talks with Chrysler.

The carnage at GM, Ford and Delphi reflects the increasing challenges to U.S. imperialism. While they shed 100,000 jobs and close over 40 factories, Toyota, Honda, Mercedes and a host of parts suppliers from Europe and Asia are opening new plants. While the "old rules of the game" may be gone for the domestic U.S. auto industry, the rules of capitalism are firmly in place. Iraq is a window to the future of what the bosses have in store for us. That is how the bosses settle their fights for markets, resources and cheap labor.

Just as we cannot avoid fascism and war, we cannot stop these attacks. But we can fight the bosses, expose the union leaders and build a larger base for PLP. When the union leadership at Ford got back the workers' reaction to the afore-mentioned survey (see above), they concluded that the workers weren't taking Ford's crisis seriously. We think it's a sign of life. And by deepening our personal and political ties, we will try to make the most of it. ☸

# Corruption Inc.: NYC Central Faker Council Robs Workers Blind

**NEW YORK CITY, Oct. 24** — Enron and Halliburton have come to this city's labor movement, albeit on a slightly smaller scale. Brian McLaughlin is president of the NYC Central Labor Council — the country's largest such council — comprising members in 400 local unions. And how did he lead them? By organizing solidarity and strikes among these one million trade unionists? By uniting black, Latino, white and Asian workers? Not quite.

Rather he has just been indicted on federal racketeering charges, embezzlement, receiving bribes, fraud and money laundering. He stole over \$2 million from the Council, the State Assembly (he's a Democrat Assemblyman), from his own re-election campaign funds and as bribes from street lighting contractors.

His annual union income of \$263,000 in salaries and expense accounts was not quite enough to finance his life style. So he took \$95,000 from donations to union-sponsored Little League baseball teams to pay his rent. He used subordinates as personal servants to take his dog to the vet and trap rodents in his basement. He stole \$330,000 from his campaign funds to pay for a rehearsal dinner for his son's wedding and for his country club membership. And the money from street lighting contractors bought an \$80,000 Mercedes-Benz for his wife and paid his son's college tuition.

As one official put it, the extent of his theft was "stunning in its breadth and

scope," lending "new meaning to the term 'hand in the till.'"

While posing as a "friend of the workers," McLaughlin "provided pivotal early support for Mayor Michael Bloomberg's re-election," (NY Times, 10/18) helping elect the very same billionaire who tried to break the NYC transit strike.

Why would the bosses' government indict such a friend? Apparently when the corruption gets so deep, they choose to use such sacrificial lambs to discredit honest trade unionists and stop the siphoning off of funds they need for their own exploitative purposes.

But then again, what should one expect from a trade union movement that's run like a business, aping the bosses with whom these labor fakers are negotiating one sellout contract after another? Yet McLaughlin's thievery is measured only in the low millions. It's small change compared to the tens of billions stolen from workers by the likes of the Rockefellers, Morgans, auto and steel barons, Halliburtons, Boeings and the rest of the really big bosses.

These labor lieutenants of the capitalist class, who support politicians who enforce anti-strike laws against city workers, are enemies of the working class.

Once workers begin using communist ideas to organize on behalf of their own class interests, they will dump these traitors into the garbage can of history. ☸

# Sit-down Striker Fights Anti-Immigrant French Bosses

**CHILLY-MAZARIN, FRANCE, Oct. 27** — “To my friends in the United States, I say that you must not let yourselves be exploited. If you do not struggle, you’ll probably remain undocumented all your lives. I encourage you and everyone else in their struggles.”

That’s the message from one of the undocumented workers here at the Modeluxe industrial laundry. When the company moved to fire some of its 22 undocumented workers (in a workforce of 160), all of the laundry workers responded with a one-week sit-down strike (see CHALLENGE, 11/1).

“It’s very important to struggle for your legalization,” the worker (who wished to remain anonymous), said in an interview with CHALLENGE. “The bosses don’t want their workers to be legalized so as to exploit them. You must not allow the boss to be the only one to act. If you depend on the boss to intervene for your legalization, it will never happen.

“The main thing for the boss is that the work gets done. You have to mobilize all the workers. In union there is strength. You have to go on strike. A factory that does not operate for one, two, three days is a very bad thing for the boss.

“It will work. You must never accept working in bad conditions. Struggle will bear fruit one day. You must not keep your heads down too much. You have to expose the problems. You have to tell people exactly what the conditions are. You’ll find that there are many people who are

opposed to the exploitation of undocumented workers.”

This worker knows exactly what he’s talking about. He and the other undocumented workers — immigrants from Mali, Senegal, and Guinea — were employed at the laundry for five years. When the police raided the factory in Dec. 2004, the CGT trade union intervened to demand the legalization of the workers. The prefect (the local representative of the French state) and the Modeluxe bosses schemed to dangle the promise of legalization before the workers’ noses, asking them and their union to assemble dossiers [backgrounds].

Meanwhile, the exploitation continued. “They formed a special ‘third team’ made up of the undocumented workers,” said the worker we interviewed. “We were under pressure to do twice as much work as the others, even though we got paid 300 euros a month less. “They set us a special rate of 250 pieces, only to make us work harder. It was impossible to meet. When we couldn’t meet the quota, they called us ‘sheep’ to let us know they considered us to be savages or animals.”

“We had to work from Monday to Saturday because we were undocumented. We could not refuse overtime. It was a new form of slavery. When you went to the toilet, the boss followed you. You could only stay in the toilet for five minutes. If you stayed longer, you got a warning letter.”

The one-week sit-down strike ended on Oct. 7, with everyone winning pay for three of the strike days and with the legalization of four workers. The 18 remaining undocumented workers continued striking until the company fired them on Oct. 20.

To pressure the prefect, the undocumented-

ed workers attended a negotiating session with co-workers from the laundry and other supporters — a crowd of 200. But the prefect stonewalled, saying only undocumented workers “with French relatives” could be legalized. Firstly, this is untrue; secondly, one of the undocumented workers is the brother of one of the legalized workers. They have the same French relative!

“We did not come to France to be bandits, we came to work,” the undocumented worker told CHALLENGE. “But this government is encouraging the bosses to exploit the workers with its policy of labeling some workers ‘undocumented.’”

This battle proves the communist idea that workers’ struggles have no borders. The fight against racism to unite all workers and for a revolutionary society without bosses is universal, from France to Los Angeles.

The 18 undocumented workers are planning more actions to pressure the prefect to legalize them. Solidarity messages can be addressed to [ulcgtmassy@wanadoo.fr](mailto:ulcgtmassy@wanadoo.fr) ☺



## RED YOUTH BUILD PLP IN MEXICO

**MEXICO, Sept 6** — A group of young students met in a university in the north of Mexico--along with PL’ers from the center and south--to commemorate the 7th year anniversary of our student organization.

We have helped spread PLP’s ideas through meetings and study groups with many students, using agitation, and propaganda through a student paper that denounces the injustices and exploitation of the capitalist system. We also distribute CHALLENGE and invite students to join the fight for communism.

The first day of activities we painted a banner with the communist fist in the main library where all could see. We passed out the student paper in one of the walk ways where the majority of students pass, playing the music of Victor Hara and Jose de Molina (two famous Latin-American protest singers).

One of the students invited from the south took the microphone and spoke about the struggle in Oaxaca and denounced the role played by the media (TV, radio, bosses’ press) in this capitalist system. The activity in the University was welcomed by many students interested in knowing more about the student organization and joining it. A student from this University, originally from Oaxaca, proposed that we be more active in informing the population in the north about the struggle in Oaxaca and the next day the group had a small forum in the town square to inform people about the struggle and to pass out more literature.

That night we met, including the new comrades, to analyze and criticize our activities. Organization and planning are vital to win more people to the fight for communism and we took steps to improve the security of all the comrades in the following day’s activities.

During the second day of activities security guards wouldn’t let us use the electricity for our sound system. We did not let that stop us. We used signs to call attention to the struggle in Oaxaca and distributed CHALLENGE. We talked with many people during our demonstration and met a person interested in knowing more about the movement. We talked about the class struggle and the importance of building a working class party, the PLP. At the end of this discussion, he gave us his address to visit him and bring him information about the movement through CHALLENGE.

At the end of the activity, we were self critical about the need to be more organized in the future. These errors hurt us, but our activities also strengthened the unity and commitment of the PLP members to continue the struggle. We need to invite more people to join our revolutionary communist movement and also give leadership to two comrades who joined the party the day before.

We invite our young student comrades to follow these examples because we learn both from our errors and from our successes. Students, workers, teachers and intellectuals can learn to organize and build the communist party that truly fights for the interests of the working class, the PLP. Join us! ☺

## LA Workers Back Oaxaca Rebels

**LOS ANGELES, Oct. 28** — A group of workers from Oaxaca held a fund-raising event here to support the striking teachers in Oaxaca. They invited other workers, including PLP members, one of whom brought copies of the last two editions of CHALLENGE. After one worker read the articles about the Oaxaca struggle and about the fight between rival imperialists and their Mexican capitalist allies over the state-owned oil company Pemex, he told the PL’er to put the papers on a table in the front of the room so everyone could get them. He said, “This tells us what’s behind the struggle.”

The workers watched the movie “Venceremos” which gave some history of the struggle in Oaxaca against the Mexican government. It showed farmworkers being kicked off their land (for a pittance) so that a high-speed railroad could be built across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. This is part of the Plan Puebla Panama, to integrate the economies of the U.S., Mexico and Central America. Farm workers who resisted felt the brutal force of the Mexican government.

The movie showed the courageous teachers’ struggle resisting the government attacks, and the mass support for them.

After the movie, a woman from Oaxaca said that when she was a child she had no shoes to go to school. She received her first pair from her



teacher. A worker from Central America, moved by the film, was reminded of the struggle in that region. He called for internationalism, for all workers to support the struggle in Oaxaca. He said workers in El Salvador went through similar attacks and finally took up arms against the bosses, but unfortunately their leaders didn’t have the unflinching goal of destroying capitalism and putting the workers in power. Today that FMLN leadership is part of the Salvadoran ruling class which oppresses the workers. He was warmly applauded when he pledged to organize friends and co-workers behind the struggle in Oaxaca. Another worker from Oaxaca linked the struggle there to the war in Iraq.

Everyone was invited to upcoming events and a hat was passed to help those in need in Oaxaca. ☺

## OAXACA

*continued from front page*

communist ideas and mass actions of support nationally and internationally. New friends are closer because of the Party’s boldness in the struggle and its communist analysis of events.

We workers will only succeed when we organize in a party to take state power for the working class, not just to remove a gangster like Ruiz so the bosses can replace him with another puppet. We need communist consciousness over the long

run to destroy the bosses’ state power and establish a communist society where the decisions are made by the organized working class.

For the comrades who have fallen in the struggle and the thousands who have fought valiantly, the PLP commits itself to redouble our efforts to bring the fight for communism to every corner of Oaxaca and the world. We call on you to march under the Red Flag of the international working class. ☺



# LETTERS

Send Letters to CHALLENGE PERIODICALS, V B N M  
PO 808, Brooklyn NY 11202 or email, [cd188@juno.com](mailto:cd188@juno.com)

## Is PLP Against 'Better Schools'?

Four teachers in a PLP-led discussion group met about the CHALLENGE series on education reform. We found the articles informative and provocative. We agreed that billionaires who donate to schools are doing so for control. Apparently, schools run locally rather than centrally — as in other countries — are a problem for U.S. capitalists. Money and control from billionaires enables the capitalist class to standardize education.

But we don't agree with the sentence: "Much of this 'reform' is aimed at winning and mobilizing working-class parents and students, especially black and Latino families in big cities, to support 'better education' with the sinister underlying plan being to win them to support the racist, imperialist U.S. bosses, the source of the very racism that continues to viciously attack these same families."

We don't understand how this would happen. Families want better education for their students, but getting it doesn't make them automatically support the bosses. For one thing, the education is still not that great, even if it's somewhat better than before the large donations. Perhaps this point wasn't explained sufficiently. Is it that the money is used for better propaganda within the schools about how "great" is the U.S. government and "way of life"? We know the schools for the working class will always be substandard under capitalism. However, families want their children to learn to read and to be prepared for a relatively decent job. Many schools fail at this.

We also discussed a lot about small schools, where three of us teach. We see advantages in getting to know the students, building community and being able to handle problems quickly because of the school's close-knit nature. We see disadvantages also, but don't understand how attending a small school leads students to believe in "all-class unity," as the article states.

School reform is, and always has been, a complicated issue. The ruling class wants it for its own reasons, and the working class wants it because they believe it will give young people a better future. Many workers feel school reform should be even more widespread. Too many children languish in schools where education is an afterthought. Are we (PLP) against "better" schools? It's true that the rulers want more control over the schools and need a more educated population in order to help maintain the profit system. However, it's also true that they don't want to educate everyone.

REDDISH TEACHERS

**CHALLENGE COMMENT:** Thank you for your questions and comments. We welcome other readers to participate in this discussion, which will always improve our political ideas.

The ruling class hopes to use school reform in several ways to win workers to support them. One is, as you suggest, reforming the curriculum to better present the ideologies necessary to imperialism in the current crisis: nationalism and "community service." They also hope to win parents and students to participate in the electoral process, to care about the politicians' educational policies and therefore feel they are a part of the system rather than feel the need to fight back. They want to channel workers into fighting for more reformed schools instead of for a new world.

But just because the bosses are implementing this plan doesn't necessarily mean workers will be won to the extent the bosses need; and it is part of PLP's job to win our friends to see how education reform serves the bosses' real needs.

The liberal reformers who started small schools are now warning that their "movement" has been co-opted by "less progressive" forces. The experiences of many comrades and our research into small schools nationwide show that the rulers are using small schools to build loyalty to individual schools — in effect, trying to build loyalty towards the administration, which represents the bosses. The rulers hope this all-class unity on a small scale will be a first step towards a working class that more fully supports the entire imperialist program.

We do want better education for working-class youth, to have the best conditions and learn the skills they need. But we must never let fighting for the reforms that one section of the ruling class advocates interfere with our analysis of the bosses' goals and our determination to destroy their entire system. Any reform achieving something positive for some students can and will be taken back when it no longer suits the rulers' needs. Only revolution can solve the problems of the schools.




**NEWS, ANALYSIS, POLITICS**

# CHALLENGE

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## Racism Won't Fly With Airport Workers

Airport workers had a week of intense struggle against the racist bosses. The last time workers were this angry was when the bosses wanted us to scab on the Northwest mechanics' strike in 2005.

Most African workers are kept in part-time jobs and resent this racism. The only full-time positions for these workers are on 3rd shift, and that's only as a result of previous fights. The bosses target Ethiopian workers to avoid paying full-time benefits like vacation pay and medical insurance, but now these workers want to fight for jobs on all shifts.

Our PLP study group has been struggling over these issues. We discussed the need to fight for communist ideas and not just limit the struggle to trade union demands that leave the bosses in power to take back any concessions we may win and to pursue their agenda of war and fascism. Internationalism, anti-racism and revolution have to be put front and center.

When the local president was finally pressured to show up for a meeting, the bosses tried to keep the U.S.-born workers from attending so the African workers would feel politically isolated. Racist foremen and supervisors acted like fascist goons. The racist ploy failed when two U.S. workers entered the meeting, although other U.S. workers were prevented from attending to give support to their African brothers and sisters. The local steward explained to the African and Latino workers what the bosses had done and how they fear multi-racial and international unity. The African workers then angrily demanded justice, embarrassing the do-nothing local president.

After the meeting and for the rest of the shift, the racist bosses tried to intimidate workers. The next day they had an emergency meeting with the big bosses because their attempts to intimidate workers failed miserably.

Within this fight we are struggling against nationalism, especially among a few Latino workers. Also, more workers are reading CHALLENGE than ever before. Workers of the world ARE uniting!

AIRPORT RED

## Workers Back Anti-Klan Protesters

As reported in CHALLENGE (11/1), a militant anti-Klan/Nazi rally took place in Harper's Ferry on October 14. Some who confronted these racists wrote some brief notes about the event.

"While distributing CHALLENGE in the town, I met a woman and her mother

from Panama who live in Virginia. They were very angry...[about] the Klan and were sorry to have missed the chance to rally with us. They loved the CHALLENGE headline showing how opposition to the Minutemen was the same fight since the racists have been active in Manassas and Herndon, Virginia. They took some papers and thanked us for being there."

"At Harper's Ferry, the KKK was allowed to use a sound system always denied to INCAR (International Committee Against Racism) rallies over a 15-year period of yearly events honoring the fight against racism at John Brown's Fort. The massive police presence and their attitude toward anti-racists made it clear to me and new friends who came that the federal government was happy to support the KKK to get out their message."

"HAVE A GREAT WHITE DAY!" That's how [the Klan rally] ended, although I'm not sure if the audience could oblige. Their appearance and speech pattern spoke of poor backgrounds, of hard times. But they cheered anyway. "White Power!" And I, a young black man dressed in baggy jeans and a tilted baseball cap, stood in the middle of the cheers — tensely waiting for one to cross the line, surprisingly unafraid if one did, and bewildered at how familiar I found the sound of blind hatred and convicted jeers that blamed another 'race' for their problems."

"I was talking to a woman who lived in the area and came to the Park with her children ranging from 11 to high school age. She was unhappy to find out that the Klan was able to rally [here]. She took one of our anti-Klan flyers and thanked us for coming to protest the racists."

"This was my second demonstration against the Nazis and Klan. I didn't care for the chants so I talked to other people in the crowd instead. I approached one Klan supporter who had a confederate flag and asked her why she liked them. She said she supported "Southern Pride." Just then the Nazis started shouting "Heil Hitler." I asked her what, exactly, did Hitler have to do with "Southern Pride." No answer, of course."

Our answer will continue to be clear: mobilize the masses to crush the racists wherever they rear their ugly heads.

D.C. COMRADE

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# THE COMMUNIST

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# Nicaraguan Election Exposes Opportunists' Betrayal

The Nov. 5 election in Nicaragua is a vivid example of the corruption and betrayal produced by armed struggle without a communist goal.

Whether capitalists fight in wars or in the political arena, their ultimate goal is control of the surplus value produced by workers. Participating in the bosses' electoral charade only perpetuates this robbery. But waging armed struggle to end capitalism's wage slavery, racism and wars without a revolutionary party fighting for communism, only leaves capitalism intact.

In Nicaragua, after 13 years of valiant armed struggle against the U.S.-backed Somoza regime, the Sandinista Front for National Liberation took state power in 1979. Tens of thousands of workers died in the process; 30,000 more died in a decade-long fight against the Contras, the counter-insurgency fascist army trained and financed by U.S. rulers to topple the Sandinistas.

Finally, "peace" came when the Sandinistas held national elections and Sandinista president Daniel Ortega lost to Violeta Chamorro, a leading oligarch. Both the Sandinista "revolutionary" rule and the following 16 years of conservative rule only benefited the old Nicaraguan ruling class, the Sandinista leaders and their capitalist backers.

The Sandinista leaders waged armed struggle to become the new capitalist rulers of Nicaragua. Thus, one of their first acts in power was to seize the mansions, Mercedes-Benz and other Somoza properties. In 1990, in their last weeks of power, they and their allies took personal possession of all the property expropriated by their government. Known as the "Piñata," it made them all multi-millionaires, including one that is now one of the richest men in Central America.

But the corruption gets worse. Ortega's running mate in the election is Jaime ("The Godfather") Morales Carazo, once the Contras' top political negotiator. Now, many of these butchers of thousands of workers are helping elect Ortega.

Ortega also made peace with Roman Catholic Cardinal Obando y Bravo, a strong supporter of Somoza, the Contras and a rabid anti-Sandinista. He also made a deal with ex-president Arnoldo Aleman, giving both of them a lifetime appointment to the

National Assembly, meaning lifetime immunity from prosecution.

Amid this wealth and corruption, workers live in poverty and squalor, over 80% on less than \$2.00 a day. More than 800,000 children can't attend school. Workers survive on the money sent back by hundreds of thousands who are forced to immigrate, mainly to the U.S., where they are super-exploited by the same bosses that helped create and perpetuate these horrendous conditions.

Yet, despite the rivers of blood U.S. imperialism has caused, it may be losing its grip on Nicaragua. Ambassador Paul Trivelli and the State Department tried unsuccessfully to organize the opposition to Ortega behind its candidate Montealegre. U.S. bosses oppose Ortega because he represents Nicaraguan capitalists looking for a better deal from other imperialists. As Salvador ("The Little Jackal") Talaveres — an ex-*contra* butcher/president of the Nicaraguan Resistance Party and Ortega supporter — puts it, "Seven thousand of our wounded war veterans are neglected. We have been working in these [conservative] alliances, but what's in it for us?" He said the U.S. "has not considered even a small budget to help the heroic fighters who served them." (LA Times, 10/29/06)

This group of bosses is hoping Chinese and Japanese imperialists will be more generous than U.S. bosses. There are plans to build two ports and a connecting high-speed transatlantic train financed by these other imperialists. The Ortega group also hopes to get them to invest in a canal with capacity for 250,000-ton ships, twice what the expanded Panama Canal can handle. These might be pipedreams or they might come alive because of the inter-imperialist rivalry. In either case, intensified exploitation, fascism and war is all that capitalism can offer the working class. But, as years of armed struggle in Nicaragua show, the workers are capable and willing to fight for their class interest. They only need the vision of communism and a party to lead them. That's PLP's task and in particular of our comrades in Central America.☺

## PLP HISTORY: Miners' Rebellion Launched PL's 44 Years in Class Struggle

During a rank-and-file miners' armed rebellion across three states in the winter of 1962-63, the Progressive Labor Movement (PLM) — forerunner of the Progressive Labor Party — cut its eye teeth on what was to become their participation in a long line of working-class struggles. While the fledgling PLM, just six months old, had no base among the miners, it decided that organizing a national solidarity campaign among as many U.S. workers it could reach was the order of the day.

Black and white miners were united in a strike against inhuman working conditions and \$25-a-week starvation wages. The mine owners launched terror attacks against the strikers, using cops and local governments to bring in scabs. The miners armed themselves to battle the bosses.

The struggle was centered in Hazard, Kentucky, where 500 "roving pickets" would go from mine to mine to oust the scabs at gunpoint. If they were unable to stop the operation, they would dynamite the mine. Black and white workers, armed, in wildcat rebellion terrified the coal bosses.

PLM organized a Trade Union Solidarity Committee (TUSC), headed by a PLM member (a railroad union local president), to ship food and clothing — including toys for the miners' kids — from several cities. It raised money for a mimeograph machine enabling the strikers to publish their own local paper. The TUSC persuaded a NYC Teamster local to donate a trailer and a driver to ship a load of relief supplies to Hazard. The strike of the armed miners had become a national issue. In zero degree weather, nearly 1,000 people attended a mass meeting at a Manhattan church to hear the miners' leader Berman Gibson. PL Magazine ran an interview with Gibson (CHALLENGE was not yet born).

When the bosses realized communists were organizing this solidarity effort, they went nuts. "Communism Comes to the Mountains!" screamed an 8-column front-page banner headline in the Hazard Herald. PLM had told Gibson we were a revolutionary communist organization early on and he was unfazed by this.

However, seeing that armed rank-and-file wildcatting miners were working with communists, Kennedy liberals and assorted social-democrats and "C" P'ers stepped in with big bucks and their own "Solidarity" committee. They red-baited the small PLM and the TUSC. Eventually Gibson couldn't stand up to the anti-communism and turned to the liberals. After many months, the strike petered out.

However, this militant working-class struggle set the tone for PLM and PLP, impressing upon us the crucial role of basic industrial workers in the fight for communist revolution, especially the unity of black and white within that. It gave us confidence in the Marxist understanding that the working class was the revolutionary class with the potential to overthrow capitalism in an armed struggle defending its class interests. It therefore pointed the way to the necessity for communists to build a base among this key section of workers.☺



Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers.  
Abbreviations: NYT = New York Times, GW Guardian Weekly (UK) FT = Financial Times

First nukes in Korea came from U.S.

There is more than 50 years of history to Pyongyang's attempt to gain a nuclear weapon, triggered in part by threats from Presidents Harry Truman and Dwight Eisenhower to use nuclear weapons to end the Korean War.

In 1957 the US placed nuclear tipped missiles in South Korea... (GW, 10/26)

Climate issue is handy for ruling class

To the Editor:

...The negative effects of climate change will build over a long period and are unlikely to produce a universal catastrophe. However, today, and for decades, the negative effects of poverty, hunger, disease and war have killed and may kill millions, but these phenomena...are effectively being forgotten as climate change dominates political debates. (FT, 10/10)

Elections aren't fooling many people

"Politics," she said, "are for silly people. Those ads come on television and I reach for the remote."

I asked if she was planning to vote on Nov. 7.

"No," she said. "That stuff really turns me off."

If you pay close attention to the news and then go out and talk to ordinary people, it's hard not to come away with feeling that the system of politics and government in the U.S. is broken....

Not even the most faithful voters were confident that their ballot would make any substantial difference. (NYT, 10/30)

New Love for sugar daddies: Democrats

Corporate America is already thinking beyond Election Day, increasing its share of last-minute donations to Democratic candidates and quietly devising strategies for how to work with Democrats if they win control of Congress....

...A lot will hold their powder for now," said Brain Wolf, deputy executive director of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. "But after the election, we will have a lot of new friends." (NYT, 10/28)

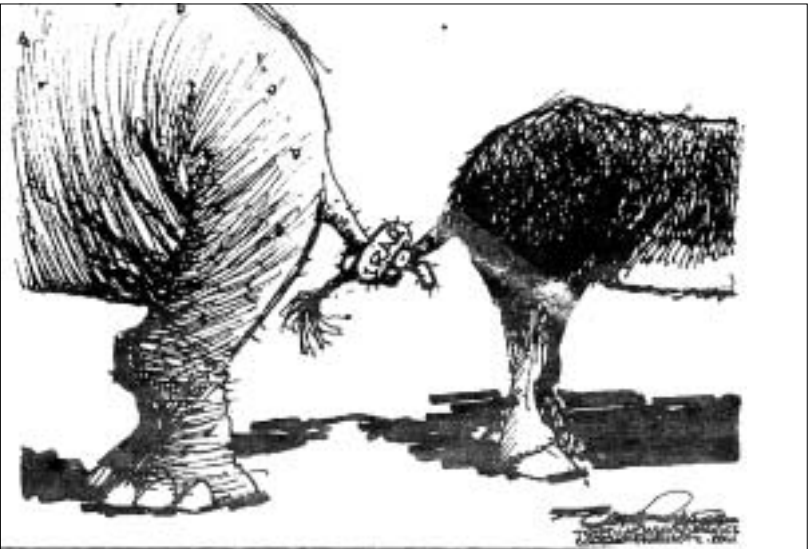
China and India see wars over energy

Chinese see their country catching up with the US in terms of global influence within 10 years....

Large majorities in India and China said they believed a conflict over energy resources was likely in Asia. Majorities also said countries had a right to go to war to ensure adequate energy supplies. (FT, 10/12)

TV ad speeds up child's development

...The pediatrician was about to conclude 6-year-old Michael's annual checkup and asked if his mother had any further questions. "No," she replied, and then felt a force-



ful tug on her arm as Michael blurted out, "Yes, we do, Mom. Ask the doctor if Viagra is right for me."

...He was merely following instructions given by a gray-haired person in a white coat in a TV ad. (Consumer Reports Health/NOV.)

North's rulers also got rich on slavery

...In the North, a number of universities have ties to slavery. Harvard Law School was endowed by money its founder earned selling slaves in Antigua's cane fields. And at Yale, three scholars reported in 2001 that the university relied on slave-trading money for its first scholarships, endowed professorships and library endowment.

...It's pretty widely agreed on that Brown [University] would not be where it is if it were not for slave money....

At least one of the Brown brothers, John, a treasurer of the college, was an active slave trader.... (NYT, 10/19)



Book Review:

# U.S. Britain Betrayed Death Camp Inmates

***Against All Hope: Resistance in the Nazi Concentration Camps 1938-1945*, by Hermann Langbein, Paragon House Publishers, New York, 1994 — Part 2 of 2**

*In part 1, we saw how the communist-led underground resistance in the Nazi death camps was able to organize under the noses of the camp guards and save lives. In this part we discuss sabotage against the Nazi war effort and escapes, as well as what we can now see were major political errors of the communist movement.*

After 1942, the majority of prisoners were assigned to arms factories. “[D]irect sabotage, such as the damaging of machines or weapons, was possible only in isolated instances. In general, methods had to be employed that were hard to detect. These methods could be found because the technical and organizational know-how of the German civilian foremen, masters and engineers was so scanty that they were often dependent on the specialists among the inmates [p. 311].” A few examples: “...grenades...failed to explode. Frequently machines broke down because of defects. Inmates...found a way of damaging the mechanism of guns...after they had already passed inspection [p. 306].” “During the final inspection there were greater opportunities for passing large

numbers of improperly dimensioned parts or for putting the right parts on a junk pile to be scrapped [p. 309].”

As the Nazis were being overrun in 1945, mainly by the Soviet Red Army, the SS was ordered to murder all camp inmates before the Soviet or U.S. troops arrived. The high command wanted to leave no witnesses who could inform the outside world about their massive crimes

murders.

In July 1944, two Jewish inmates, Arnost Rosin and Czeslaw Mordowica, escaped and handed documents to the press, the Pope, and the governments of the U.S. and Great Britain [p. 258]. Communist groups inside the camps, it would appear, too often relied in error on the “allied governments.” During an uprising by Jewish inmates in Treblinka, August 2, 1943, Yankel

Sixty-one years after the end of WW II hundreds of thousands of working-class civilians are being murdered by U.S. and British rockets in Afghanistan and Iraq, and by Israeli rockets in Gaza, the West Bank or Lebanon.

against humanity. Knowing of this plan, the prisoners attempted escapes to ward off imminent mass extermination.

Contact with partisans (guerrilla forces organized against the Nazis) and sympathy of local people outside the camps both increased in the later years of the war. Fugitives from Auschwitz received support, and news from Polish resistance organizations was smuggled into the camps. But the resistance relied increasingly on other contacts, such as the Red Cross and “allied” news media for getting information out to the world, such as maps of the camps and details about mass

Wiernik escaped and with the help of his Polish friends, wrote down his experiences. Copies of his report were sent to London and the U.S. However, instead of bombing the railroads to the camps, the British Royal Air Force (RAF) and the U.S. Air Force (USAF) fire-bombed the German city of Dresden, killing hundreds of thousands of civilians.

Another example of the tragic reliance on these so-called “Allies” came when the Nazis marched prisoners from the Neuengamme camp onto ships, in order to hide the evidence of the death camps. The RAF bombed and sank the ships on

May 3, 1945, resulting in the deaths of 7,000 to 8,000 prisoners.

We can see with hindsight that communist prisoners and their leadership in the international communist movement made major political errors before and during World War II: a) they relied on capitalist governments to gain support and save lives, with tragic results, and b) by failing to oppose nationalism both within the camps and outside — though many nationalities did resist in unity — they failed to organize the resistance groups into one international working class party that made communism the primary goal.

The cost of this failure was the prolonged life of the bloody rule of capitalism and its inter-imperialist wars for cheap labor, markets and oil. Sixty-one years after the end of WW II hundreds of thousands of working-class civilians are being murdered by U.S. and British rockets in Afghanistan and Iraq, and by Israeli rockets in Gaza, the West Bank or Lebanon.

The illusions about cooperation with capitalism played a major role in the downfall of the old communist movement, and helped prevent a qualitative advance toward communism. Nevertheless, the heroic struggle of communist-led prisoners should inspire us to fight for the communist revolution that will defeat fascism permanently.☺

## In Memory of Sam Chestnut Nov 26, 1943 - Sept. 26, 2006

Sam was a comrade and friend in the Bay Area PLP transit collective. He worked 30 years at MUNI RR in San Francisco driving trolleys and trains until forced to retire due to a work\stress-related stroke.

Sam's life was symbolic of many black workers here. His parents migrated to SF in search of work and lived in the Bay View Hunter's Point projects. After his time at the Post Office, Sam found many childhood friends who were all looking for that good union job. Here being black meant working for MUNI.

The stress and grind of driving, killer schedules and long hours combined with institutional and politically-inspired racist stereotyping made high blood pressure, strokes, and heart attacks endemic among MUNI operators. A 30-year study of “Stress & Hypertension” clearly documented this connection but management and the union, TWU Local 250a, did nothing to change it. In fact, conditions are worse.

Sam loved his family, friends and co-workers. He was especially proud of his son Jeremy. He laughed, partied and embraced people from all different backgrounds. At his Memorial, co-workers and friends remarked over and over about his kindness, his support “for doing what's right.” He helped organize family and social groups to go to Yosemite and Santa Cruz. Union dances were another opportunity to defy the African American union leadership who pushed black nationalism in order to maintain control over their “private domain,” the MUNI workforce.

Sam came under special, vicious attack for his friendship and activity with “the white boy, communist.” May Day was another big event in his life. While Sam loved many, he hated every aspect of the demeaning, racist system he faced every day.

After study groups on political economy and dialectics, Sam said, “I now read between the lines in the newspaper and see the real significance of what's going on.” Below are excerpts from a report Sam gave at a PLP workers' conference on how he dealt with racism, sexism and individualism in a mass organization. They are a fitting memorial to his contribution to class struggle and the development of communism.

“For years I worked outside the organized labor movement, having very little use for reforms to solve the problems of a crumbling system. I had very little success in promoting communist ideas; the effort was



frustrating and slow.

In June 1998 I had a chance to work with a group of working-class people...that formed...[around] safety concerns in our community following the death of a 9-year-old child....At our first meeting, 23...neighbors attended. The mood quickly changed from safety issues to people venting their anger at both management and employees. A core group of six people with different levels of political understanding were picked to...organize the fight against unfair rent increases, unlawful evictions and bad maintenance. I was accepted as a member of the core group...because I was a known communist.

Most members...used racist terms when talking about maintenance workers, who are all Latino. I struggled with my core members to understand class; how capitalism uses racism to divide and exploit the working class.... [I asked] them, “who are you more alike, the maintenance workers or the politicians and bankers...trying to evict us?”

[As a] result, racist terms will never be used at core meetings and...will be challenged at all community meetings....

Being a communist, I felt like a counter-puncher trying to answer each question with a communist analysis...to show the contradictions not only in their question but also in their answers. This [continued]... inside and outside meetings, at my house, at the store...anywhere we ran into each other....

I've found it very rewarding being a communist working inside a reform group. People's goals are geared more to the short term. It's perfect for me in trying to develop peoples' understanding of the capitalist system, trying to teach them to be critical thinkers ...to see and understand contradiction.”☺

## Murder Mystery With Working-Class Hero

***A Race Against Death*, Timothy Sheard**

Looking for a murder mystery whose hero is a worker instead of a cop? Try this one!

Lenny Moss is a maintenance worker and shop steward in a Philadelphia hospital taking on the bosses at every turn. Lenny works collectively with six other characters to solve the mystery. The book steers clear of stereotypes — the workers have good hearts, burn with righteous anger over injustice, but have plenty of human faults and failings too. Sometimes Lenny wants to just give up and lead a quiet life, but his sense of duty to his co-workers keeps him going.

The story turns on the murder of a doctor who has been performing unsafe late-term abortions on poor black women. A white medical student joins black medical students, who in turn team up with the hospital workers, to find and interpret clues. The unfolding story brings out issues of black nationalism, multiracial unity, and love and concern for fellow workers. Lenny's firm principles, which include multiracial unity and service towards the workers he represents, as well as his refusal to be intimidated by management, earns his co-workers' trust. The police detective refers to this by saying, “You're the guy that hears everything in this place.”

Management's knee-jerk cruelty, indifference and coldness is glaring, correctly reflecting some basic truths about the U.S. workplace. The book doesn't have a Hollywood ending, but justice gets served for this moment in time.

The author will be speaking at the annual “Thanks for Fighting Racism” Dinner in the Washington, D.C. area on November 18 at 6 pm. If you're in the area, give us a call at 301.779.7432 and join us.☺

